A

SERMON

On the TWO late

EARTHQUAKES.

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On the Occasion

EARTHQUAKES

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4.

The Nature and Danger of deſpiſing repeated Reproofs, conſidered;

IN A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

Hanover-ſtreet, Long-Acre, *March* 11. 1749-50.

On Occaſion of the TWO late

EARTHQUAKES.

By JOHN ALLEN, *M. D.*

Publiſhed at the Deſire of many that heard it.

LONDON:

Printed for J. NOON, and R. HETT, in the *Poultry*.

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PROV. XXIX. 1.

He that being often reproved, hardeneth his Neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without Remedy.

THE mighty GOD, the Lord and Governor of univerſal Nature, hath lately ſpoken to us in Two ſuch awful Voices, that for the *Earth* not to attend his *Call* would be highly criminal and inexcuſable. Thoſe who are wiſe will obſerve theſe things. As they conſider the ſettled Courſe of Nature, in which there is ſuch abundant Proviſion for our Safety, Eaſe, and temporal Happineſs, as a Token of the divine Goodneſs; ſo any threatening Deviations from that Courſe are, in their Eſtimation, ſolemn Warnings to a guilty World; and they are affected with them as it becomes them to be affected. But with the Generality it is far other-

wiſe. GOD *ſpeaketh Once, yea Twice; yet they perceive it not:* They only ſpeculate a while on ſuch Things as rare and uncommon Incidents; but they pay little Regard to them as the *Work of the Lord, and the Operation of his Fingers.* People may think of this Turn of Mind as they pleaſe; but, if there is a GOD that governs the World, it is no better than practical Atheiſm, and what, as ſuch, GOD muſt reſent: When GOD's Hand is lifted up in a threatening way, Mankind ought to ſee it; but if Men are not afraid of his Tokens, if one Reproof is given after another, and a greater comes to enforce a leſs, let them not imagine GOD will always ſpare: The wiſe Man's Denunciation in my Text was founded both on a juſt Knowlege of what was becoming of GOD to do, and on an Obſervation of what he had actually done in Caſes of this kind; and in ſuch Terms is it couched, that if there is Force in Words, it ought to make the Guilty tremble, when it is ſo peremptorily ſaid, that *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his Neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without Remedy.*

I ſhall proceed upon my Subject in the following Method.

I. I ſhall give ſome Account of the criminal Diſpoſition and State of Mind which the Text ſpeaks of. *Hardening the Neck* under frequent and repeated Reproofs.

II. I ſhall conſider what is here ſaid of the ſad Iſſue and Conſequences of it.

And then cloſe the Whole with a few Reflections on that ſolemn and repeated Reproof which GOD hath lately given us.

I. I ſhall give an Account of the criminal Temper which the Text ſpeaks of.

What our Tranſlators have rendered *He that is often reproved*, in the original *Hebrew* is a *Man of Reproofs*; which conveys the Idea of a Man who has been (as one may ſay) the Butt of Reproofs, and received on his Mind many Arrows from out of that friendly Quiver. Reproof ought to wound like a Dart, and bring Perſons to a Senſe and Feeling; but the Character here ſpoken of,

is that of a Man who, tho' *often reproved, hardens his Neck.* 'Tis a Metaphor taken from Beaſts, whoſe Necks, by being long accuſtomed to the Yoke, grow ſo hard and callous, that a painful Impreſſion cannot eaſily be made upon them; and very ſtrongly repreſents the State of their Minds on whom the ſharpeſt Reproofs will have no Effect. When the Scripture ſpeaks of *Hardneſs of Heart, Dulneſs of Ears, Searedneſs of Conſcience*, or whatever Terms it makes uſe of to deſcribe a moral and practical Inſenſibility, it means exactly the ſame thing with what is here called *hardening the Neck.*

In order to give as diſtinct an Idea as I can of this Diſpoſition and State of Mind, it will be proper, that I conſider the Principal of thoſe various and repeated Reproofs Mankind meet with; and then ſhew how that Inſenſibility of Mind, which is called *hardening the Neck*, ſhews itſelf under them.

So good is GOD to the Children of Men, and ſo intent upon their Happineſs, that they can't go out of the right Way without breaking down a Variety of Intrenchments He has thrown up to guard and preſerve them:

them: He has ſo *hedged up their Way with Thorns*, that they muſt take Pains to be miſerable; and it is not without a great deal of Difficulty that any Man can undo himſelf.

There is that Light of Reaſon which GOD has fix'd in the Breaſt of every Man, that Heart-written Law, by which Men accuſe or excuſe themſelves, according to the moral Nature of their Actions. From this Light of Reaſon, Conſcience derives its Being and Authority; compares our Character with our Rule, keeps its Court in the Breaſt of every Man, ſits in Judgment, and paſſes Sentence: And unſpeakably ſolemn are the Tranſactions of this Court: Here the Sinner is often impleaded, arraigned, found guilty, and puniſhed, for Things which the World knows nothing of, and often for Things the World judges favourably of, thro' an Incapacity to judge of the Nature of Actions, and the Principles from which they flow.

There is that glorious Aid to the Imperfection and Darkneſs of human Reaſon, which GOD has given us in the Revelation of his Will in the Scriptures: Theſe are *profitable*

ſitable. as for *Doctrine and Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*, ſo for *Reproof and Correction* too: *By them*, ſays *David*, *is thy Servant warned*. Hence the Word of GOD is ſaid to be *quick and powerful, ſharper than a two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder the Soul and Spirit, the Joints and Marrow; and is a Diſcerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart*, Heb. iv. 12. 'Tis indeed the Mode of the Times to be induſtrious to have as little of Reproof from this Quarter to anſwer for as may be; but ſome Mens Diſguſt to the Bible is to the Bible's Honour, and witneſſes to its Power and Efficacy to the Purpoſe mentioned. The Reaſon why they *hate the Light* is, becauſe *their Deeds are evil*, and they come not to it, leſt it ſhould reprove them. In ſuch an Age, however, of Light, as this, 'tis hardly in any Man's Power to be an abſolute Stranger to the great Contents of the ſacred Volume: Early Education often lays in ſuch a Stock of Scripture Knowlege, as gives to wicked Men, in their After-Life, a great deal of inward Recoil and Uneaſineſs: At ſome times Cuſtom, Form, and Decency, leads them, where Conſcience would not; and obliges

obliges them to hear the Truths of Religion open'd to their Underſtandings, and ſeriouſly preſt upon their Hearts; and at ſuch times bad Men have been often caught like Fiſh out of their own Element: They have met with ſomething which, tho' it may have done them little good, has made them very uneaſy; at worſt, has raiſed ſuch a Storm within their Souls, as has coſt them time, and a great many guilty Arts, to lay. So great an Efficacy in reproving has the Word of Word of GOD, that many very profligate Men, when *Righteouſneſs*, *Temperance*, and *Judgment to come*, have been *reaſoned of*, like *Felix*, have been made to *tremble*, tho' they would not be reformed.

A further Reproof is often given to Sinners by GOD's Providential Diſpenſations. Providence always moves with moral Views; and where its Diſpenſations operate according to their genuine Nature and Tendency, there is not in the whole Compaſs of Things a more uſeful Diſcipline than what theſe adminiſter. When GOD loads his Creatures with Benefits, if they have any Tincture of ingenuous Gratitude, how readily ſhould his Goodneſs lead them to Repentance!

pentance! The very Favours of GOD here act as Reproofs; for if we ſhould ever have a Thought of turning again to Follies, they ſtop us in the way, they ſtare us in the Face, and aſk us how we can be ſuch Monſters thus to requite ſuch a Benefactor and Friend. So alſo, when the Providence of GOD appears in Frowns, in private Afflictions, public Calamities, or even in an awful Threatening of ſuch Calamities, theſe are all adapted to impreſs the leſs generous Paſſions of our Nature, and awaken a Fear and Dread of an Almighty, Juſt, and Jealous Being; and many have been known to receive a Reproof given in a Providential Frown, who in a milder way of Application have neglected it. Theſe things are often Evidences of a Controverſy GOD has with us; and generally there is ſomething either in the Viſitation itſelf, or in the Circumſtance of the Time, the Perſons, or the Place where it falls, from which it may be eaſily collected, what the *Wickedneſs* is which GOD deſigns ſhould be *corrected*, and what the *Backſliding* that ſhould be *reproved*. And therefore, whenever *the Voice of the Lord crieth aloud*

cloud in any Diſpenſations of this kind, the *Men of Wiſdom will hear his Name*, and make uſe of all the Materials they can collect, in order *to know the Rod, and him that appointed it*; and be ſolicitous, that GOD would *ſhew them wherefore he contendeth with them.*

Again, Sinful Men are often reproved by the ſecret Suggeſtions of GOD's good Spirit: Indeed the particular way of this Influence we know not, and 'tis ſomething ſo agreeable to the natural Operation of our own Faculties, that we can't preciſely determine, in ſerious Impreſſions that are made upon our Minds, what Share belongs to the one, as diſtinct from what belongs to the other: But as the Word of GOD has revealed to us, that there is ſuch an Agency of the Divine Spirit on the Souls of Men, we may be ſure it is a real, tho' a ſecret and inviſible Thing: And indeed, if we conſider—that *in* GOD *we live, and move, and have our Being*;—that we have an abſolute Dependence on GOD in every thing; and that all the Powers of our Minds muſt at all times lie open to him—If we conſider withal a plain Fact, that good Sen-

timents, Deſires, and Reſolutions, ſometimes are found riſing in our Minds unaccountably to ourſelves, to which we were not led by any previous Train of Thoughts, ſometimes in the midſt of Scenes more adapted to ſuppreſs and baniſh, than invite them—How, on certain Occaſions, a ſerious Sentiment ſhall penetrate the very Bottom of our Hearts, that we have been acquainted with very long, that we have had upon our Minds a thouſand times, but it has always paſt away like a Tale that is told, or a Dream when a Man awakes—When, I ſay, we lay theſe things together, we muſt ſurely conclude, that there is a ſecret Communication of the great Father of Spirits to the Spirits of Men; and if it is a real Thing, it is certainly deſign'd to be a kind and gracious Proviſion for us under our preſent Circumſtances of Weakneſs and Temptation. By this good Spirit ſinful Men are often reproved, and oftener, I believe, than they are ready to own: It has knock'd at the Door of their Hearts in lively Repreſentations of their Danger, and the remedileſs Miſery they are bringing themſelves into; and, in a word, joins in with

the Voice of Reaſon, Conſcience, the Word, the Providence of GOD, the ſerious Warnings of our beſt Friends, and every other Reprover.

We know what is the Deſign and Tendency of all theſe Reproofs. *Lo, all theſe things* GOD *worketh oftentimes with Man, that he may open his Ears, and ſeal Inſtruction to him; that he may withdraw Man from his Purpoſe, and hide Pride from Man; to bring back his Soul from the Pit, to be enlightened with the Light of the Living:* Job xxxiii. 16. 29, 30. But the Text exhibits a Character where all this Labour is loſt, of Men who, being *often reproved, harden their Necks.* In order to have a proper Idea of this black Character, let us only conſider what is the true and proper State of the Mind, and the Heart of Man, with regard to the bleſſed GOD, and the momentous Concerns we have with him; for whatever that is, the State and Temper of Mind I am opening, is the direct Reverſe of it. Now the true State of the Mind and Heart of Man, with regard to GOD, and the Concerns we have with him, is this: The Underſtanding being impreſt

with a lively Apprehenſion of his Being and Perfections, our Accountableneſs to him, that our Happineſs lies in his Favour (with the reſt of the great Truths that belongs to this Claſs), we are engaged to ſeek his Favour with our whole Heart, in the Way in which he has repreſented it attainable; our great Care is to pleaſe him: From hence the whole Soul takes its Bent and Ply; the Will chuſes the Will of GOD, the Heart loves his Ways; and nothing is more hateful and odious than Sin, and Diſobedience to him. Hereupon, every Signification of his good Pleaſure is ſeriouſly attended to, and every Reproof he at any time gives *enters into an obedient Ear*. Now, *hardening of the Neck* is the Reverſe of all this. The Perſon in this State of Mind has not loſt his intellectual Powers, and the Underſtanding of a Man; but his moral Underſtanding, or Practical Judgment, is greatly impair'd. *His Eye being evil*, his whole Soul is in a State of ſpiritual Darkneſs.—Conſcience is by its Office a Spy and Guard upon our Actions; but in ſuch a State as I am ſpeaking of, it has loſt all its Authority, and ceaſes to ſmite Men when they

they do Evil. The Word of God is *quick and powerful*; but these People are quite unmoved by its most alluring Encouragements, or even by its most pointed Terrors. Truths by which others are *pricked to the Heart*, they can read and hear without any Emotion; nay, perhaps treat the most awful Themes with Ridicule. When God speaks in the Voice of his awful Providence, in *Warnings*, or in *Calamities*, they are so brutish, that they don't consider: If they have Fear, 'tis but transient and momentary; if they have Sorrow, 'tis *only* Sorrow, not that of the *godly Sort*; if they are *stricken*, they don't *regard*; if they are *consumed, yet they refuse to receive Correction, they make their Faces harder than a Rock, they refuse to return*, Jer. v. 3. This is not a State into which Men can sink all at once; 'tis one of the last Stages in a Course of Wickedness; but one Sin makes way for another; and a Contempt of one Reproof prepares for a Contempt of all: Repeated Acts of Sin strengthen the general Habit; and by degrees Men settle in resolute Contempt of God, an Hatred of every thing that is good, and a fixed Hardness of their Necks, and their Hearts.

But,

But, *He that hardeneth himſelf againſt God cannot proſper*, however he may bleſs himſelf in his Heart upon the Hopes of it. The Text lays before us the Iſſue and Conſequences of this State of Mind; and, certainly Words of greater Terror were never put together. There are Three Things, which we may conſider as ſo many Gradations of Dreadfulneſs in the Denunciation.

1. Such ſhall be *deſtroyed: Their End is to be cut off. The Wicked ſhall go away into everlaſting Puniſhment.* This Puniſhment is repreſented under ſo many Horror-ſtriking Figures, that if I was to dilate upon them, I ſhould make both you and myſelf tremble: But no Words can expreſs *the Power of God's Anger*, nor the Dreadfulneſs of that Miſery which hardened Sinners will find to be their Lot and Portion: 'Tis *being deſtroyed*; tis *Perdition*; for every thing is loſt but a bare Exiſtence, and that is only continued to be a Capacity for Miſery. Theſe are ſuch *hard Sayings* to many, that I believe one of the principal Grounds of the Spite, with which the preſent Generation

treats

treats the Word of GOD, is, that ſuch *hard Sayings* are in it. But as what we believe and teach is no other than what GOD has awfully declared, *Let God be true, and every Man a Lyar.* He can vindicate all his Proceedings, and will convince the World, that *there is no Unrighteouſneſs in Him.* They ſhall behold his Severity; but ſhall be obliged, in ſpite of themſelves, to acknowlege his Juſtice.

2. 'Tis threatened that thoſe who harden their Necks ſhall be deſtroyed *ſuddenly.* You are to conſider the Words as ſpoken under a Diſpenſation when it pleaſed GOD to reward Virtue, and puniſh Wickedneſs, very often by ſenſible Interpoſals of his Power and Providence. We have many Declarations under the Old Teſtament, that He would do ſo; and many Inſtances in Fact, where this was done. Thus *Nadab* and *Abihu* died before the Lord; and of *Korah, Dathan,* and *Abiram,* we read, that *the Earth opened her Mouth, and ſwallowed them up.* There is ſomething particularly tremendous in the Account that is given of their Deſtruction. *Numb.* xvi. 29—34.

If,

If, ſays *Moſes*, *theſe Men die the common Death of all Men, or if they be viſited after the Viſitation of all Men, then the Lord hath not ſent me. But if the Lord make a new Thing, and the Earth open her Mouth, and ſwallow them up, then ye ſhall underſtand, that theſe Men have provoked the Lord. And it came to paſs, as he had made an End of ſpeaking all theſe Words, that the Ground clave aſunder, that was under them: And the Earth opened her Mouth, and ſwallowed them up, and their Houſes, and all the Men that appertained to* Korah, *and all their Goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the Pit, and the Earth cloſed upon them; and they periſhed from among the Congregation: And all* Iſrael, *that were round about them, fled at the Cry of them; for they ſaid, Leſt the Earth ſwallow us up alſo.* When therefore the wiſe Man ſpeaks of thoſe who harden their Neck being *deſtroyed ſuddenly*, he might refer to ſuch ſignal Inſtances of ſudden Deſtruction, and untimely Deaths, as thoſe Times were well acquainted with. Now indeed the Caſe is ſomewhat different; and as the Diſcovery of a future State is much more clear, GOD

is pleaſed to leave Religion to be ſupported, and Vice and Wickedneſs to be reſtrained, by the Hopes and Fears of that, uſing the other Method more ſparingly: And yet even now GOD has not ſo limited himſelf, but that in Caſes of very enormous Wickedneſs he does ſometimes take ſignal Vengeance, and deſtroy hardened Sinners *ſuddenly*. But a Man is deſtroyed *ſuddenly*, whoſe Vices bring him to ſudden Ruin. A Man is deſtroyed *ſuddenly*, who loſes all the Eaſe of his Mind and Conſcience; and that is a Deſtruction that has been found to come ſometimes very ſuddenly and unexpectedly. It has not been a Thing quite unknown for the Conſciences of very wicked Men to take a ſudden Alarm, and riſe upon them in the greateſt Fury; and dreadful and ſwift has the Havock been, that in ſuch Circumſtances has been made on the Soul. Men *have been a Terror to themſelves, and all about them*; and Deſpair has driven them to the ſaddeſt Extremities: But, ſuppoſing nothing of this Kind to be the Caſe, and Sinners die as hardened as they have lived; there is nothing very long in this World, nothing far from ſudden Deſtruction, that is only de-

layed till the End of a ſhort and tranſitory Life: Then it will come at the fartheſt; then *nothing remains but a fearful looking for of Vengeance, and fiery Indignation, to conſume the Adverſaries.*

3. 'Tis added, as what muſt extinguiſh every Ray of Hope, *and that without Remedy.* For many Departures from GOD there is a Remedy, in the Mercy of GOD, the Merits of CHRIST, and the Grace of the Goſpel: But hardening the Neck after repeated Reproofs is a Sin of that monſtrous Size, 'tis ſuch a Complication of Ingratitude to the Divine Goodneſs, daring Contempt of the Divine Power, and, in a Word, ſuch an Inſult on the whole Godhead, and this ſo long perſiſted in, and ſo often repeated, that it is not to be wondered, that there is no Remedy: Not that even this Caſe is without Remedy from want of Mercy in GOD, and Merit in the REDEEMER, but from the moral Impoſſibility of renewing thoſe who are guilty to Repentance: And nothing can be more clear, than that thoſe who are incapable, thro' their own Inſenſibility, of Repentance, muſt be incapable of Mercy;

con-

conſequently they muſt be deſtroyed, *and that without Remedy.*

Thus I have finiſhed the Conſideration of the Two Things contained in the Words, the Account of this bad Diſpoſition and State of Mind, and the Iſſue and dreadful Conſequences of it. The Subject has been ſo full of Terror, that it has been far from pleaſing to my Mind to dwell ſo much on it; but as the late awful Warnings dictated it, and appeared to me like GOD's Finger pointing it out, it demanded my ſerious Attention; and, I hope, has engaged yours.

I ſhall wave all other Improvements; and the only Uſe and Application of what has been ſaid, ſhall be in reference to the Two frightful Shocks of an Earthquake, which have been lately felt in this Part of the Kingdom: Such things as theſe are not ſo uncommon in hot and ſultry Climates; but, in our colder Country, Two ſuch violent Convulſions, and that one ſhould ſucceed another at ſo ſmall a Diſtance of Time, have not been known in the Memory of Man; nor do I remember, that any thing

like it is to be found in our Hiſtory. Let others be wholly intent, on this Occaſion, upon ſearching into the natural Cauſes of theſe *Phænomena*, and philoſophize GOD out of all their Thoughts, if they pleaſe; it becomes us, as Chriſtians,

To look thro' Nature up to Nature's GOD,

and to regard theſe Things with religious Sentiments, and devout Impreſſions. *God hath ſpoken once; twice*, O my Soul, *have I heard this* (and in what expreſſive Language!) *that Power belongeth unto* GOD. Pſal. lxii. 11. No doubt but there are natural Cauſes of theſe Appearances; but what is Nature, but a GOD-governed Machine? What are natural Cauſes? With regard to Him, all Cauſes are Effects which his Hand produces: *What ailed ye, ye Mountains, that ye ſkipped like Rams, and ye little Hills, like Lambs?* Our Houſes and Temples? that the very Foundations of them were ſhaken? Bring in thy Account, Philoſophy! but know thy Place. The Philoſophy of Nature is but the Knowlege of the Art of GOD: Let it centre in him, and there let it reſt. *Trem-*

ble,

ble, thou Earth, at the Preſence of the Lord. Pſal. cxiv. 7.

The very Nature of the Caſe, as threatening to our Lives, ſpeaks it a Reproof: Of theſe we have had many within the Courſe of a few Years: GOD has been for ſome time gradually *cutting off our Herd from the Stall.* 'Tis not long, ſince a foreign War, and a Rebellion at Home, menaced the Loſs of our Liberties, our Religion, and every thing that was dear to us: But *here*, Almighty GOD drew out, as it were, his own dreadful Artillery againſt us: So violent was the *laſt* Shock eſpecially, that had it laſted but a little longer, and been a little more forcible, GOD only knows how fatal to us the Conſequence might have been; In all Probability, we had been buried in the Ruins of our own Houſes; our Beds would have been our Graves, from whence we ſhould never have riſen more.

How extenſive and various was this Reproof! GOD knows how many were, at the Time of the *laſt* Shock, lying on an unlawful or adulterous Bed; how many deviſing Miſchief; planning Schemes of forbidden Pleaſure, filthy Lucre, or vain Ambition; how

how many ſnoring away their laſt Night's Debauch and Riot; what Multitudes ſleeping in every Senſe, ſleeping in a State of Sin, under the Guilt of unrepented Crimes, and Children of GOD's Wrath; and who, if that Night had been their laſt, muſt have awoke, and found themſelves in *Hell*; *ſuddenly deſtroyed, and that without Remedy.* What a Rouſe ſhould this Convulſion be to every Sort and Claſs of Sinners? to the openly profligate, to the avaricious Worldling, to the ſly and artful Hypocrite? How adapted was ſuch a Shock to ſhake their Souls, to make them tremble, as *Felix* did, when *Paul reaſon'd of Righteouſneſs, Temperance, and Judgment to come?* The very Doctrine of theſe Earthquakes! and GOD himſelf was the Preacher of it.

And as there was one Circumſtance peculiar and ſtrange, that the Violence of the Shock was greateſt in the Cities of *London* and *Weſtminſter*, and the Parts moſt contiguous; this naturally leads us to conſider it as GOD's Voice particularly directed to theſe Cities, and therefore, of all Men, the Cities that felt it moſt ought to attend to it: Has not GOD ſingled us out as Places that

ſtood

ſtood in the greateſt Need of Reproof? If it had fallen out in the more deſert and uninhabited Parts of the Kingdom, it might have paſt over perhaps with ſmaller Notice: But for the Voice to come to the Places where there was the greateſt Concourſe of People, and at a Time of the Year when theſe Cities are moſt crouded with Inhabitants, does, in my Apprehenſion, plainly tell us, that *to us he calls*; and to us eſpecially, above all *the Children of Men*, is this Voice directed: Why did the Earth tremble, and make a Noiſe, under our Feet? Did it not, as it were, groan under the Weight of our Crimes? Was not this Warning ſent to reprove the Sins that are in the Midſt of us? The Sins of Commerce in one of the Cities; the Sins of Idleneſs, Luxury, and Fulneſs of Bread, in the other; and that profane Contempt of GOD, his Goſpel, and his Day, and that abſolute Diſregard to Religion, that has overſpread the Whole, and from which no Part is free: And againſt ſuch repeated Reproofs, *ſhall we harden our Necks*, and laugh at thoſe who think of theſe Things in any ſober and religious Views (as I know ſome have done)? Let

ſuch

ſuch go on ſporting themſelves in their own Deceivings; they do but tempt their own Ruin, by *provoking the Lord to Jealouſy*, as if they *were ſtronger than he.*

We have all Reaſon to be thankful to GOD, that he has had Mercy on us. *'Tis of the Lord's Mercies, that we were not conſumed.* He has only ſhewn us what he *could* do. He that has done this, can do more: Having ſhook our Houſes twice, he is able to tumble them about our Ears; and not only make the Earth to tremble, but to open its Mouth, and ſwallow us up; make LONDON what LIMA is, and bury Houſes and Inhabitants in one common Ruin. I make no doubt but there are Thouſands that will laugh at all this as an Argument for Reformation and Repentance; truſt the Chance of any further Warnings of this kind, and go on in their old Courſe: But let wicked Men remember, GOD can find ways of vindicating himſelf, and verifying his ſolemn Declarations, that *tho' Hand join in Hand, yet ſhall not the Wicked go unpuniſhed.* The Contempts that are caſt upon his Attributes, his Laws, his Goſpel, and his Grace, by Profaneneſs, by moral

Corruption and Diſſolution of Manners, by the growing Infidelity of the preſent Age, he will reſent in a Way that becomes the Majeſty of the eternal King. Earthquakes may no more be felt; but *Death* is certain, is near; and *Hell* follows cloſe behind it.

So impreſt do I find my Mind with the Weight and Moment of eternal Things, that I could, methinks, wiſh I had a Voice that would reach as far as this Noiſe and Convulſion did; and if I had ſuch a Voice, I know with what Words I would fill it: I would tell---The Power-and-wealth-entrenched Libertine, that there was no Place ſo ſtrong where GOD could not come at him by his Almighty Arm---The guileful Hypocrite, that there was no Darkneſs or Shadow of Death, where the Workers of Iniquity could ſcreen from his all-ſeeing Eye---Him that, in projecting Schemes of Worldly Wealth, adding Houſe to Houſe, and, amidſt the Ambition of calling Lands by his own Name, neglects and loſes his own Soul; how eaſily GOD by the Touch of his Finger can bury him in that Houſe and that Earth he doats on, and make his Idol his Grave---I would repreſent, that,

if the Convulſion of an Earthquake is ſo dreadful, how dreadful that Scene muſt be, when *all things ſhall be diſſolved; the Heavens paſs away with a great Noiſe, and the Elements melt with fervent Heat, the Earth and the Things that are thereon,* not only ſhaken, but *burnt up.*—I would repreſent the Horror and Affrightment which will ſeize the Souls of Sinners, when the Archangel, with the Trump of GOD, ſhall ſhake the whole Creation; when *they ſhall call for the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them,* and the Earth opening and ſwallowing them up would be a Bleſſing, if it would hide them from the Wrath of GOD, and the Lamb.—I would diſplay the Vanity of building on any thing in this uncertain convulſive World, and the Wretchedneſs of the Men who have choſen their Portion in this Life.—And, finally, I would hail every Saint and Child of GOD (every one who by Faith in CHRIST, ſerious Religion, and a good Conſcience towards GOD, can lay in his humble Claim to the Promiſes and Hopes of the Goſpel) as the Happieſt among Men. Such Convulſions as theſe we have now felt, make on his

Mind

Mind reverential Impreſſions of the Power and Majeſty of GOD; but cannot hurt, nor need they give him any ſlaviſh Terror. *His* GOD *is his Refuge and Strength, a very preſent Help in Trouble; therefore he need not fear, tho' the Earth be removed, and the Mountains be carried into the Midſt of the Sea:* Nay more (in the Words of a great Poet of our own)

Should the whole Frame of Nature break,
In Ruin and Confuſion hurl'd;
He unconcern'd might hear the mighty Crack,
And ſtand ſecure amidſt a falling World.

FINIS.

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